

PART OF THE AIR FORCE MISSION STATEMENT IS "EXCELLENCE IN ALL WE DO"; WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO YOU?

Excellence is a tradition that beats proudly in the hearts of all Americans. The United States Air Force is a specific example of the furtherance of such a tradition. Since its formation in 1947, the Air Force has relentlessly strived to serve and protect America and her people with unyielding strength, valor, and conviction. Although it has established itself as the largest and most technologically advanced air force in the world, it is the spirited and courageous men and women, selflessly serving their country and fellow citizens, who truly distinguish the United States Air Force from all others.

Webster defines excellence as unusual goodness or worth. Throughout its existence, the Air Force has showcased this unique generosity not only in regards to national affairs, but also in world affairs. During the Cold War, when Soviet leader Joseph Stalin disrupted the supply traffic to Berlin, the United States Air Force undertook Operation Vittles, also known as the Berlin Airlifts. From June of 1948 to May of 1949, the Air Force was able to deliver an astounding 2.3 million tons of cargo on the 277,685 flights, providing vital necessities to all of Berlin's citizens. The excellence in efficiency proved by the Air Force in these missions continues to remain unmatched. In the years following, the Air Force continued to lead in many other humanitarian efforts including Operation Safe Haven, which relocated 20,000 Hungarian refugees following the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, and Operation Provide Hope, which provided medical equipment to former Soviet republics during their transition to democratic and free-market states.

Since its conception, the Air Force has been involved in a number of wars and conflicts including World War I, World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, the Kosovo War, and, of course, the Iraq War. Its members have valiantly served to preserve democratic values in all parts of the world with great regard to "a proud heritage, a tradition of honor, and a legacy of valor," as stated in The Airman's Creed.

A few years ago, I witnessed this tradition first hand when visiting Andrews Air Force base in Maryland. Watching the air show, I was astonished to see the meticulous craft and precision displayed by the pilots. The intricate and complex formations of the planes in flight still lives in my memory. However, despite being surrounded by the most sophisticated and advanced technology comprehensible to man, it was the infectious spirit of enthusiasm for duty that captivated me. Watching the pilots animatedly discuss their air crafts and missions spurred my interest.

The 351,800 members of the United States Air Force, groomed by tradition, guided by values, and driven by strife towards excellence represent the heart and soul of American culture. Exhibiting superiority of character and performance, both on and off duty, they are the role models in an often misguided period in society. As the United States Air Force continues "To fly and fight in Air, Space, and Cyberspace," ordinary citizens, like me, can only expect excellence in all of their endeavors. Their example inspires us all.

IN HONOR OF MARY LOU NIXON

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mary Lou Nixon, a profoundly respected and familiar figure to many in Cleveland, as she retires following a thirty-two year career dedicated to guiding students across the Greater Cleveland Area to college.

For over thirty years, Mary Lou Nixon has served as the Cleveland Scholarship Programs Advisor, where she worked with many low income families and other struggling students with securing financial aid for a college education. With her guidance and outstanding specialized service, she has helped an innumerable amount of students in the Greater Cleveland Area attend college. Her "fact sheets" and inspiring attitude gave students and families the tools and confidence to send themselves or their children to college, despite the many challenges that many face. If a family was unable to fill out student-aid application forms on line, she walked them through it. If a student was unable to come up with the finances to attend college, she helped them secure the resources they needed.

Mrs. Nixon is the local expert and has unlocked countless college opportunities for students in the Greater Cleveland Area. She made attending college accessible to everybody and guided members of the community who would have otherwise been unable to attend college realize their dream of earning a bachelors degree. Recognized for her patience and personal demeanor, Mrs. Nixon served as a mother figure to many in more ways than one; she and her husband opened their house numerous times to children in need of a place to stay. As an active member of the community, Mary Lou Nixon will dedicate her post-retirement time working with the Lakewood Public Library, where she sits on the board of trustees.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of Mary Lou Nixon, who dedicated her life to helping students across the Greater Cleveland Area attend college and in recognition of the invaluable guidance she provided to so many.

TRIBUTE TO TALIA LEMAN

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a great achievement by seventh-grade student Talia Leman of Waukee, Iowa. Talia was named one of America's top ten youth volunteers for 2008 with the National Prudential Spirit of Community Award.

Talia was selected from a field of nearly 20,000 candidates for her outstanding volunteer community service. The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards were created 13 years ago to encourage youth volunteerism and to identify and reward young role models. Talia received a personal award of \$5,000, an engraved gold medallion, a crystal trophy for her school, and a \$5,000 grant from The Pruden-

tial Foundation for a nonprofit charitable organization of her choice.

Talia created "RandomKid" an organization that seeks to educate, motivate and unify young people around the world to work on a broad spectrum of pressing needs. She began the organization 2 years ago by encouraging kids to collect coins instead of candy on Halloween, and donate the money to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Her message was widely publicized to kids across the country and reportedly raised millions of dollars for Katrina victims.

Talia established a nonprofit organization and created the website, www.randomkid.org which solicits young people for projects to help rebuild the Gulf Coast, raise money to build a school in Cambodia, find homes for stray pets, and collect DVDs for soldiers overseas. Talia is currently encouraging schools to make and sell their own private-labeled bottled-water products to help fund clean-water technologies. She's also working on setting up a "mini-United Nations" made up of young delegates from around the world who work together to address global children's issues.

Talia is a shining example of the dedication, determination and faith present in today's youth and their promise as tomorrow's leaders. I am proud to represent Talia Leman and her family in the United States Congress. I know that my colleagues join me in commending Talia for her accomplishments and dedication to making a difference in the world.

RECOGNIZING THE MOBILE DIVISION OF THE FBI ON THE 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE FBI

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the Mobile, Alabama, FBI Field Office on the 100 year anniversary of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Organized in 1908, America's best investigators were brought together and organized to form what is now the FBI. Over the past century, many of the world's most dangerous criminals have been apprehended by the FBI.

The FBI started as an agency covering interstate crimes such as robbery and embezzlement. In the mid 1920s, they were responsible for capturing lawbreakers such as Al Capone, Bonnie and Clyde, and Baby Face Nelson. Countless serial killers, kidnappers, and other violent criminals have also been captured as a result of the hard work and diligence of the FBI.

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the FBI began a long term transformation from the world's premier law enforcement agency to the world's premier law enforcement, intelligence, and counter terrorism agency. Today, there are over 30,000 employees, including over 12,000 special agents. There are 56 field offices, more than 400 smaller resident agencies in the United States, and 15 sub-offices in cities around the world.

The Mobile FBI Field Office is an active member of the Mobile community, providing training to law enforcement personnel including firearm instructor certification, crime scene